Today's Topics:
                         airport security
              are QSL cards really necessary for awards?
                        CHEAP OSCILLOSCOPES
                       Contest log program?
                        Headsets and VOX.
                     Old QSL Hints and Kinks

Date: 9 Nov 89 11:53:34 GMT
From: hfsi!bower@uunet.uu.net (Michael Bower Comm.)
Subject: airport security

>You can carry it on all you want; you just can't use it in flight
>without explicit prior permission from the airline, _NOT_ the captain.

This is a sticky point. If the airline gives you permission, the captain
can still stop you. The captain has ABSOLUTE authority while in
command. (It used to be that the captain even had control over the
FAA in an emergency. I presume that is still true.)

If the airline DOESN"t give you permission (they say NO!), then the
pilot is going against company regs/policy if he does give you
permission.

(One Christmas, I was given a CHEAP, CHEAP aircraft radio receiver
(for picking up the proper aircraft frequencies). On my flight home,
I explained to the captain that I was a pilot and wanted to monitor
their transmissions from the main cabin. He gave me permission and
gave me the first (ground) frequency to use.

SOmetime later (well into the flight) the captain was making
a routine "If you will look out the left side...." type announcement.
At the end of the announcement, he said "and for Mike back there, if you
have lost us, we are on xxx.xx". I was very impressionable and thought
that was really neat. To this day, that airline is one of two that I
tend to use.)

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Date: 9 Nov 89 12:00:38 GMT
From: hfsi!bower@uunet.uu.net (Michael Bower Comm.)
Subject: are QSL cards really necessary for awards?

>Making out your own QSL cards and trying to pass them off for awards
>seems to be in the gray area between ethical and unethical. Certainly

Perhaps a slight change to QSL design might help. Currently a lot of
QSL cards have "PSE ___ TX ___ QSL" on them where one can check
the appropriate place. Maybe it could be changed to
"PSE ___ TX ___ CONF ___ QSL". It would work like this. I would
fill in the card for the other station and mail it to him/her. It would
already be posted back to me. All the other station has to do is initial
and send back (presumably after checking the log). I would have the QSL,
he/she has confirmed it and now it is legit.

This will break down somewhat for DX since you couldn't put stamps on but
might still improve QSL probability somewhat.

(THis is just a suggestion and I don't know if it would work. I don't send
QSL (even though I am a sorter) since my radio is "mothballed".)

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Date: 8 Nov 89 22:53:06 GMT
From: hpda!hpcuhb!hpscdc!rkarlqu@ucbvax.Berkeley.EDU (Rick Karlquist)
Subject: CHEAP OSCILLOSCOPES

yes. You get what you pay for on those scopes, and no more.

N6RK

Date: 8 Nov 89 14:25:13 GMT
From: virgin!ubbs-nh!noel@decvax.dec.com (N. Del More)
Subject: Contest log program?

In article <1250@marlin.NOSC.MIL> price@marlin.nosc.mil.UUCP (James N. Price)
writes:
>In article <30500273@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu> phil@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu writes:
>>

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>>I would be interested in seeing or hearing about contest logging programs
>>that are available as freeware or shareware, with sources.
>
>And I'd even be willing to PAY (heaven forbid) a nominal amount
>for a program if it's good (i.e. the non-DX equivalent to the K1EA
>program for CQWW, ARRL Test, etc).

And I'd be even more inclined to pay a nominal amount for one that
included "C" source code (heck any source code) so that if you don't like
"something" you can change it to suit your tastes, or to add to it for
some specific need.

My ideal program would include:

1.   Regular AND Contest logging.
2.   QSL Management.
3.   Awards Management.
4.   Terminal Control of Packet, Amtor and RTTY and trancievers that
     support such control such as the TS-440s etc.
5.   Be easily configurable in order to support a variety of devices.
6.   Include source, preferably C.
7.   Be reasonably priced and well documented.

Obviously that means the ability to run under some multi-tasking OS, ie.
Deskview, OS/2 or in my case Unix and support two or more serial ports at
one time.

Unfortunately, most of the programs I have seen have been of the
"shareware" variety, and most of those have been written in dBase
(compiled).  No source included which is unfortunate, as a couple of them
are fairly good and could have been fairly easily reworked, modified or
added to had the source been available.  I mean heck... even I have
Foxbase (Xenix).

The best one I have seen to date was a simple implementation of the ARRL
logbook with a very basic search facility.  And thats pretty dismal, I'd
like to check out "CT" but have had no success in getting my hands on it
to date.

Oh well.....

73's

Noel
N2AXI

P.S.  I'm still in the market for an amplifier and antenna tuner, if you
have one for sale... drop me a line.
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Noel B. Del More             |                      decvax!ubbs-nh!noel
17 Meredith Drive            |                      noel@ubbs-nh.mv.com
Nashua, New Hampshire  03063 | It's unix me son!  `taint spozed tah make cents
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Date: Thu, 09 Nov 89 11:12:23 GMT
From: "Pete Lucas, NCS-TLC 0793-411613" <PJML@IBMA.NERC-WALLINGFORD.AC.UK
Subject: Headsets and VOX.

I have an 'AIRLITE 62' headset with built-in noise-cancelling boom mic.
(dynamic type). I have found that this headset is one of the most comfortable
for long periods of wear (8 to 10 hours at a stretch). It has very good
sealing round the ears to keep out extraneous noise, and removable cotton
covers over the ear-pads and head-band.
'Airlite 62' headsets are used by the majority of British airlines for
their pilots/copilots. I beleive they were also used on Concorde at
one time. Mine cost 35 pounds sterling, new.
I use the thing without VOX, i have a small diecast box fitted in the
lead, with a 3-position biased switch, so its possible to flick to
'TX' against the spring bias for short overs, or put it the other way
(latching TX) for longer overs.
This avoids the problem of someone creeping up behind you & tapping you
on the shoulder (because the external noise sealing of the headset is so good,
and theyve shouted at you 3 or 4 times without you hearing) and they then
startle you, and the sounds of you having a coronary are then broadcast to
the world coz the VOX has gone 'on'.............!
I used to use VOX with *VERY* short timer (20mS hang time) and with good
net discipline, its almost like full-duplex. It would drop the
transmitter between words. Long enough for someone to shout 'Priority'
or 'safety' and take control of the net. Sort-of like the audio equivalent
of full-break-in on CW. (It does tend to rapidly destroy the TX/RX
changeover relays though :-).) I also used to use a 'fast' repeater
along the same lines - no courtesy tones, voice idents, bleeps or
other 'noises off'. We needed PL-tone (or as we call it here, CTCSS)
for this though.

                                            >-=Pete=-<

Date: Thu, 9 Nov 89 08:25:10 EST
From: pescatore_jt%ncsd%gte.com@RELAY.CS.NET
Subject: Old QSL Hints and Kinks

QSL HINTS AND KINKS - WB2EKK

I cut this out of an article I had written for an old novice cookbook we
put together in the 70s, and updated it a bit. Its sorta stream of
consciousness:

The best way to increase your QSL return rate is to think about those things
that prompt you to respond to someone else's QSL card, and to decide how
badly you want each individual card. The amount of time and money you spend
on QSLing will be directly related to these two factors.

HOW TO FILL OUT THE CARD:

Log the time and date of the contact accurately. Use GMT for the time AND
DATE. Write the date 4 Sep 89, not 9/4/89 which means April 9th to many
people. Write your numbers legibly.

DOMESTIC QSLs:

If you are a ragchewer and just like to collect cards, slap a 14 cent on
'em and send 'em out. If you really want the card back, put it in an envelope
with an SASE enclosed. In the remarks part,
use the other guy's name, make it personal. For domestic QSLing, what YOUR
card looks like is important; an attractive or unusual card will increase
your return rate.

If you are 18 years old or younger, mention your age in your remarks. In
fact, if you are, say 13 or younger, by mentioning your age you can probably
get away without an SASE if you write in block scribble.

DX QSLs:

For the garden variety countries (most of Europe, JA, VK/ZL, etc) bundle
them up and send them to the ARRL outgoing bureau (look in the How's DX
column in QST for info on how to do this). One exception seems to be south
America; with the exception of PY and LU, most of the SA countries seem
to ignore the bureau.

For the slightly rare countries (like PZ, 5H, 5B4, etc) listen to what the
operator says about QSLing (direct, via bureau, or a manager). If its via
the buro, do that. If it is direct or via a DX manager, put your card, a
self addressed large (more in a bit) envelope, and a dollar bill
(euphemistically called green stamps these days) in an envelope
and send it to the DX address. Don't put any callsigns on the envelope and
put the dollar bill between the SAE and your card so it doesn't show through

the outer envelope. You'll keep the honest Postal workers honest this way.

For the SAE, I've found that using the European size Air Mail envelope greatly increases my returns. Our business size envelope costs more for the DX station to mail, and often gets discarded. Any stationary store will sell you a bunch of these.

What your card looks like matters less for DX QSLing, but a nice card can't hurt. If it is an important card to you, and after three or four months you have not gotten a reply, try again. I usually include another buck, since I assume it was lost in the mail.

For stateside managers, use an SASE like going for a domestic. You can help the manager, and maybe increase your return, by putting your call and the time and date of the contact on the top of the back flap of your SAE/SASE (not the outer mailing envelope). This helps because many managers will get your card before the get the logs from the DX station, and they sort the cards by time and date to await the logs.

For contacts with Russkies, send them all to Box 88. Yes, I know you can send direct these days, but lets not spoil them. It takes a little longer, but it sure is a lot cheaper.

HOW DO I KNOW WHERE TO SEND THE CARD?

Buy the DX callbook. Too cheap? Too bad. Subscribe to the W6GO list, or a DX bulletin. Listen to the DX operator. Check the Packetcluster of your local DX club, most have a QSL manager database these days.

End of INFO-HAMS Digest V89 Issue #859
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